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-- There will be no Daily Summary on July 17 - a Japanese holiday.

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(8) Feelings of abductee families on sanctions against North Korea

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)  
July 13, 2006

On the afternoon of July 12 while Okinawa was hit with the high winds of typhoon No. 4, the parents - Shigeru and Sakie Yokota - of Megumi Yokota, who was abducted to North Korea, spoke at the gym of Ishigaki Daini Junior High School in Ishigaki City, on Ishigaki Island.

Sakie underlined before more than 700 students and their parents:

"It means that if North Korea fires a missile, not only will a country be threatened, but the beautiful waters around this island and the beautiful earth will be devastated. I hope you will think about various North Korean problems such as human rights through the abduction issue and take action to resolve them."

The Association of the Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea, to which Mr. and Mrs. Yokota belong, and another group supporting abductees have called on the Japanese government to invoke economic sanctions against North Korea.

On July 5 when the North launched its missiles, the association released a statement saying that economic sanctions would be the best way to shake the Kim Jong Il regime. They praised the Japanese government's quick decision to impose sanctions, including a ban on entry of North Korean ferry Man Gyong Bong into Japanese ports.

The statement also held that the government should have mentioned that Pyongyang's unfaithful response so far to the abduction issue was one of the reasons why Japan imposed sanctions.

In consideration of such a statement, Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe called Shigeru on July 6 and told him that the government had decided to impose sanctions, taking into the North's stance toward the abduction issue. He also told a press conference the same day:

"The government has imposed sanctions on the North as that country fired missiles, but we also took into account the fact that Pyongyang has not responded in a sincere manner to the abduction issue."

At a press conference the same day, Shigeru stated:

"If North Korea thinks Japan imposed sanctions on it due to its missile launches alone, this would adversely affect the abduction issue. North Korea would become stubborn and discontinue dialogue."

Teruaki Masumoto, chief secretariat of the association, stated in a  
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gathering held in the city of Fujisawa, Kanagawa Prefecture:

"We are most concerned about the possibility that the abduction issue will be eclipsed by the missile issue. We don't want the government to think that things are okay so long as the North doesn't fire missiles."

A draft resolution that Japan, the United States, and other countries submitted to the United Nations Security Council did not stipulate the abduction issue as a reason for sanctions against North Korea. A vote on the draft resolution has been put off in order to carefully watch China's efforts to persuade Pyongyang.

Mr. and Mrs. Yokota said in Ishigaki, Japan's southernmost city, "We would like the government to hold firm to its position."

(9) Commentary: North Korea's missiles and Japan's shields

YOMIURI (Page 13) (Full)  
July 13, 2006

Hidemichi Katsumata

Faced with the threat of North Korean missiles, some government officials are maintaining that Japan should acquire the capability of striking enemy bases. This enemy base strike advocacy would have to be discussed from the perspective of constitutionality and international law. However, the general public has a growing sense of crisis about Japan's national security. What should politics prioritize now to secure the nation?

Many difficulties in store for acquiring strike capability

With the 1991 Gulf War and the 2003 Iraq War in mind, one may think about the advisability of enabling the Self-Defense Forces to strike North Korea's missile sites, and we may come across the scenes of dropping bombs and missiles from airplanes or launching cruise missiles from naval ships. In carrying out such airborne and seaborne operations, the SDF will need aerial refueling aircraft to lengthen its aircraft's cruising distance. In addition, the SDF will need precision bombs for pinpoint target hitting with the aid of a

global positioning system, as well as Tomahawk cruise missiles.

In March next year, Japan will introduce its first air tanker. The SDF plans to deploy a total of four tanker planes. Among the Air Self-Defense Force's fighter jets, F-15 and F-2 fighters can be refueled in flight, and their cruising radius will be markedly expanded with airborne refueling. The ASDF is now equipping 250-kg antisurface bombs for F-2 fighters with precision-guided systems. All ASDF F-2 fighters will be payloaded with precision-guided bombs in two years.

The ASDF has introduced these hardware systems for the defense of Japan's outlying islands and other missions. They can be used to strike enemy bases. If that is the case, one may wonder if the SDF is ready to strike enemy bases. The matter, however, is not so simple.

In the first place, a cruising fighter jet needs to approach a target base in an enemy country. To do so, the fighter jet has to

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sense radarwaves from the enemy country's ground-based radar. Then, the fighter has to jam the radarwaves and destroy an air defense system, or many of the ASDF's fighters on a mission would be downed by enemy antiaircraft missiles. None of the ASDF's currently deployed aircraft and weaponry is capable of doing so.

"If we're ordered to strike a base over there, that would be the same as the one-time kamikaze suicide attack," one ASDF officer said.

Then, is it all right if there are Tomahawk missiles? The answer is no. In the Gulf war, US forces launched many Tomahawk missiles to destroy Iraq's Scud missiles, which range 300-500 kilometers. However, they could not hit those targets because the Scud is a mobile missile of the trailer-launched type. British commandoes entered Iraq, where they discovered launchers and guided Tomahawks to destroy those launchers.

The Rodong, a North Korean missile with a range of 1,300 kilometers targeted to hit Japan, is also a missile of the mobile type like the Scud. Moreover, many of North Korea's military facilities are impregnable underground fortresses that are hard to destroy.

From the start, Japan is not fully capable of gathering intelligence with the aid of satellites needed to strike an enemy base. Japan therefore cannot locate key military facilities. If Japan is going to acquire such functions and capabilities, it will have to spend huge money and time. Moreover, Japan depends on US forces for most of its hardware systems, technologies, and intelligence.

North Korea targets its ballistic missiles at Japan, so it is understandable that government officials are wondering if Japan can do nothing until it comes under attack. It would be necessary to discuss the advisability of striking enemy bases. However, Japan has many more things to do first to defend itself.

Japan-US bilateral defense planning needed to cope with imminent threat

Surprisingly, Japan currently has nothing like bilateral defense planning with the United States in order for US Forces Japan (USFJ) and the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to act in concert with each other to defend Japan against ballistic missile attacks.

It became evident from this February's SDF-USFJ joint command post exercise (CPX) at the Defense Agency. The CPX was based on a computer-aided simulation of scenarios that began with US forces picking up North Korea's fueling of ballistic missiles. The scene later developed into an emergency on the Korean Peninsula. Japan declared a neighboring contingency. However, a number of ballistic missiles came flying to Japan backing up US forces.

However, no orders were issued to the SDF for defense operations even in that case. The Ground Self-Defense Force was only ordered to dispatch troops on a disaster relief mission to a disaster-stricken

area where a missile landed. "Even in the case of training, we're not allowed to issue defense operation orders if there are no grounds," a senior official of the Defense Agency said. "At this point," the official added, "we don't know the government's course of action about how many missiles we must see landing in Japan to

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issue defense operation orders and when a neighboring contingency is changed to an emergency in Japan."

"Japan cannot use the right of self-defense in the event of a neighboring contingency since it is under normal circumstances." This explanation came from the government when it revised the SDF Law to stipulate missile intercept procedures. The government was equivocal in responding to ballistic missiles. As a result, the CPX ended up with no scenario of SDF mobilization for defense operations. In contrast, the United States, based on a final report on USFJ realignment, is shielding Japan at a high pitch with missile defense (MD) systems.

Last month, USFJ installed a high-performance missile-tracking radar system at the ASDF's Shariki base in Aomori Prefecture. In late August, the US Navy will deploy the USS Shiloh to its Yokosuka base in Kanagawa Prefecture as the first MD ship loaded with Standard Missile 3 (SM-3) missiles capable of intercepting North Korea's Rodong missiles. Furthermore, the US military is also planning to deploy the Patriot Advanced Capability 3 (PAC-3), an intercept missile of the ground-based type, to the US Air Force's Kadena base in Okinawa Prefecture, where 24 PAC-3 launchers will arrive this month at the earliest and will be operational within the year.

Of course, the Shiloh alone cannot cover even a half of Japan's defense zone, and the PAC-3 is no more than localized shielding. The Maritime Self-Defense Force will take at least several years to rig its four Aegis-equipped destroyers with SM-3 missiles. It is not until then that Japan can acquire the capability of defending itself against ballistic missiles.

Then, what can Japan do now? In 1997, the Japanese and US governments revised their guidelines for bilateral defense cooperation. The new version of the defense guidelines stipulated that "US forces will consider, as necessary, the use of forces providing additional strike power" in case Japan comes under a ballistic missile attack. "The wording 'consider' means that they will respond to such a situation according to what and how far Japan will do," one SDF officer says. Under the present circumstances, however, the US military may use its MD systems in Japan at its own discretion.

"If there is an imminent threat near at hand, the government must think of how to deal with it to secure the people." This is an excerpt from the words of former US Secretary of State Powell in Foreign Affairs magazine two years ago. What the government should tackle now in the first place is to expedite bilateral defense planning between Japan and the United States in order to provide against a ballistic missile attack. Japan and the United States should define their respective roles in terms of what USFJ and SDF will do and how far. This will also lead to deterring North Korea. The government must not mistake the order of precedence.

(10) Interview with Minshuto President Ichiro Ozawa on regime change

ASAHI (Page 15) (Excerpts)  
July 14, 2006

Asahi senior writer Hiroshi Hoshi: Japan and China should be able to  
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discuss matters frankly is your theory. In view of that theory, was your visit to China fruitful?

Ichiro Ozawa: It was good that I was able to share the basic view with President Hu Jintao that Japan and China have to make efforts

to eliminate bilateral obstacles and develop cooperative relations. It will be useful when we take the reins of government.

Asahi senior writer Atsushi Yamada: Besides China, I'm afraid that Japan's relations with the United States are not so good.

Ozawa: You can say that again. When Mr. Koizumi did an imitation of Elvis Presley, President Bush raised his eyebrows. Mr. Koizumi was terrible.

Yamada: Mr. Ozawa, if you were prime minister, how would you handle Japan-US relations?

Ozawa: Giving priority to the Japan-US alliance that may follow a suicidal course is one option, but a master-servant relationship is out of the question. Japan must be an equal partner. As long as Japan takes a cosmetic approach, it will never be able to earn the trust of the United States.

Hoshi: Prime Minister Koizumi has been in power for over five years. What's the secret?

Ozawa: His popularity comes from the public's dissatisfaction with the current situation and uncertainty about the future.

Yamada: He is tactful, isn't he?

Ozawa: He is really good at deceiving people. Japanese people are too conservative and timid to change the system. Mr. Koizumi has fulfilled people's desire to sustain the LDP administration with his performance.

Yamada: There seems to be some similarities between your book Blueprint for a New Japan and Mr. Koizumi's policies.

Ozawa: Oh, no. Mr. Koizumi doesn't think of anything. He is only interested in how to raise his popularity to remain in power.

Yamada: In truth, bureaucrats might have been leading the Koizumi administration.

Ozawa: Of all past prime ministers, Mr. Koizumi relies most heavily on bureaucrats. Bureaucrats' power is growing.

Yamada: Can you give us some examples?

Ozawa: Take a look at highway and postal reforms. The administration totally gave in to bureaucrats. The government ended up with building highways in the countryside, as planned. Nothing will change in postal administration.

Yamada: Minshuto fought an uphill battle over postal reform, didn't it?

Ozawa: We've been saying all along that the postal savings and

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insurance businesses must be downsized before being privatized and that the mail delivery business must not be privatized.

Hoshi: If the Japanese people are really conservative and hope only for gradual reforms, a regime change would be difficult, wouldn't it?

Ozawa: The Japanese public takes things slowly. They are filled with dissatisfaction with the current situation and anxiety for the future. People feel uneasy because the Japanese safeguards have collapsed and Koizumi's LDP has failed to present substitutes.

Hoshi: Blueprint for a New Japan begins with a story that there are no fences at the Grand Canyon. You used to insist on deregulation. Are you saying that the country now needs safeguards?

Ozawa: There is no question that deregulation is necessary, but we must consider safeguards at the same time. This applies to social security and employment, as well. Both the government and private

sectors should introduce the merit system actively. But the vast majority of the country's salaried workers are hoping for stable lives. For such people, our society has devised the lifelong employment and seniority systems as safeguards. I think that they must be protected and that they are compatible with free competition.

Hoshi: Blueprint mentions a 10 PERCENT consumption tax rate.

Ozawa: The consumption tax must be hiked as necessary. But before that, wasteful spending must be eliminated and the administration must be reformed fundamentally. A consumption tax hike should come after, for instance, transferring tax collection authority from the central to local governments.

Yamada: The government adopted the Basic Policies for Economic and Fiscal Management and Structural Reform, which do not mention any consumption tax hike. Won't the consumption tax become an issue in next year's Upper House election?

Ozawa: It probably won't be an issue. The government and the LDP turned the subject away from the attention of the general public so as not to make it an issue. Pension and employment would become issues, however.

Hoshi: Tell us about your strategy for wresting power from the ruling coalition.

Ozawa: In next year's Upper House election, the opposition camp will win a majority. If Minshuto can garner over 50 seats, endlessly close to 60, the opposition camp would be able to force the ruling coalition into a minority.

Hoshi: You have been searching for ways to join hands with postal rebels, such as the People's New Party. Some Minshuto members think there is no need to reach out to LDP-like individuals.

Ozawa: Such a view raises questions about their political sense. In order to win a majority, we must turn LDP supporters into Minshuto supporters. Such a view explains why they have always been an opposition party. There is no need to reject sympathetic people who

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will for Minshuto. We are talking about a battle for power here.

Hoshi: To Mr. Ozawa, politics is about power and struggles. But many Minshuto members regard politics as something like study sessions. I believe you find their view disagreeable.

Ozawa: Without power, we cannot realize our standpoints. I think those people have come to realize gradually that power is at stake in elections in any democracy.

Yamada: What are your slogans for the Upper House election next year?

Ozawa: I have many slogans, but we're going to pick a couple of them that are easy to understand for the general public.

Yamada: You haven't determined them yet?

Ozawa: We'll come up with basic policies before year's end. What we're going to push forward is a matter of election technique or strategy.

Hoshi: Suppose the opposition camp won a majority in the Upper House election, what would you do after that?

Ozawa: Mr. Koizumi said last year, 'The outcome of the general election reflects public wishes.' By the same token, we will say, 'Public wishes have given the opposition camp a majority.' From there, we will follow a path to the helm of government.

Hoshi: In order to remain in power, the LDP could approach some Minshuto members after the Upper House election at the risk of another political realignment.

Ozawa: We will take the initiative as soon as the ruling coalition fails to win a majority, and the LDP won't be able to reach out to us. I have learned bitter lessons during the LDP-Liberal Party coalition days, so I have no intention of discussing any fishy deal with the LDP.

Hoshi: Given the recent North Korea situation, there is a tendency to fuel nationalism ahead of the LDP presidential election in September.

Ozawa: Anxiety and discontent might prompt the general public to ride that trend, and that worries me.

Hoshi: To Mr. Ozawa, taking power and become prime minister are separate matters, aren't they?

Ozawa: To me, a change in administrations is important for two reasons. One is for enrooting parliamentary democracy in Japan, and the other is for realizing true reform. So it doesn't matter who becomes prime minister.

Hoshi: You don't have to be prime minister?

Ozawa: No, I don't have to be prime minister. But the person who becomes prime minister must be reform-minded.

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Yamada: You are selfless. I thought all lawmakers want to become prime minister.

Ozawa: In my mind, I already served as prime minister. (During the LDP days), I could have had that position if I had wanted to. People say it would be easier for me to implement reforms myself. That could be true, but it would be a lot easier if someone else could reinvent the country on my behalf.

Hoshi: You were often absent from Lower House plenary sessions. The LDP says such a person cannot serve as prime minister.

Ozawa: Many times, Prime Minister Koizumi and cabinet ministers didn't attend sessions, either. For over 15 years until I became chief cabinet secretary, which forced me to abstain from attending sessions, I had not skipped even a single plenary session. I have acted on the basis of my priorities. But I have always attended important plenary sessions.

Yamada: The candidate Minshuto backed in collaboration with the ruling coalition was defeated in the recent Shiga gubernatorial race. That makes us wonder if Minshuto is in good shape.

Ozawa: The race gave us a bitter lesson, and that was good; we needed that. Lawmakers are to blame for that, but labor unions are not totally blameless.

Yamada: Minshuto went along with the labor unions.

Ozawa: We had to go along with them, and that was the problem. Now that we have learned a lesson, we will avoid that option in the future.

SCHIEFFER